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# Press Release

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## **SCAG NAMES LOCAL LEADERS, ACTOR AND NEWS REPORTER AS REGIONAL CHAMPIONS AT 2008 GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

*Lake Forest Councilmember Richard Dixon Installed as New President  
for 2008-2009 Session*

**LOS ANGELES – May 8, 2008** – The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) today recognized five local leaders as Regional Champions for their outstanding achievements at SCAG's 2008 Annual General Assembly. Established in 2005, the Regional Champion Awards acknowledge non-elected leaders for exemplary service in regional planning and leadership to the Southern California region.

SCAG's Community, Economic and Human Development Committee (CEHD) presented their Regional Champion award to John Husing, Ph.D., of Economics and Politics, Inc. Dr. Husing is a leading authority on the impact of the goods movement industry on the region and has spent decades studying the city and county economies of Southern California, with an emphasis on the Inland Empire. Most recently, Dr. Husing completed major studies on the impact of the proposed Clean Truck Program at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. He also was listed by the *Los Angeles Times Magazine* in August 2006 as one of the 100 most powerful people shaping life in Southern California.

Actor Ed Begley, Jr., one of the most well-known figures in environmental advocacy, received the Environmental Regional Champion award from SCAG's Energy and Environment Committee (EEC). Begley currently is a board member of the Environmental Media Association and Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and formerly served as chairman for both organizations. A long-time environmental leader in the Hollywood community, he also is actively involved with the boards of other organizations including the Thoreau Institute, the Earth Communications Office, Tree People and Friends of the Earth.

The Transportation and Communications Committee (TCC) selected two individuals as Regional Champions: Norm King, as the first director of the Leonard Transportation Center at California State University San Bernardino, played an instrumental role in helping to establish

the center in 2006 to promote research and outreach on transportation issues in the Inland Empire. King also served as executive director of the San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG), San Bernardino County Transportation Commission and three additional SANBAG-related authorities prior to his retirement in December 2005.

Gill Hicks, who founded his own consulting firm Gill V. Hicks & Associates, Inc., also received the TCC Regional Champion award. From 1990 to 2000, Hicks was the general manager of the Alameda Corridor project, one of the largest public works projects in the country. His firm specializes in transportation planning, project management and inter-governmental relations and has worked for Southern California clients such as the Port of Long Beach, Port of Los Angeles, Port of Hueneme, Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Authority, OnTrac Joint Powers Authority and SCAG.

The Membership and Communications Subcommittee selected Manny Medrano, a reporter with KTLA News Department, as its Regional Champion. Medrano spent the last three years as an ABC News correspondent in Washington D.C. covering the U.S. Supreme Court and providing legal analysis for all ABC News broadcasts. He has covered important national news stories, including the addition of two new justices to the Supreme Court and landmark decisions involving abortion, affirmative action, the death penalty and other controversial issues. Medrano received an Emmy Award and Golden Mike Award for his coverage of the O.J. Simpson case, and he was named to *Hispanic Business Magazine's* "100 Influentials List 2005."

The General Assembly also marked the changing of the agency's leadership for the 2008-2009 session. Lake Forest Councilmember Richard Dixon was formally installed as SCAG's newly elected president, replacing outgoing president San Bernardino County Supervisor Gary Ovitt. SCAG also selected Harry Baldwin, Mayor of San Gabriel as first vice president. The new leadership team will serve in their positions until May 2009.

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### **About SCAG**

SCAG is the nation's largest metropolitan planning organization, representing six counties, 188 cities and more than 18 million residents. SCAG undertakes a variety of planning and policy initiatives to plan for a livable and sustainable Southern California now and in the future. For more information about SCAG's regional efforts, please visit [www.scag.ca.gov](http://www.scag.ca.gov).